SPIDER-MAN: THE LOST YEARS

MARVEL SELECT

#1 AUG

DEMATTEIS
ROMITA JR.
JANSON

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
SPIDER-MAN
THE LOST YEARS

It was a little past ten on a Saturday night...

... and the interstate running into Salt Lake City was crowded, traffic at a crawl because of the heavy rains.

It can be a hard life on the road -- I know that from experience...

HAKK
HAKK

... and the combination of greasy truckstop food, too few hours of sleep, and too MANY hours sitting on your butt...

Oh, GOD...

SKREEEE

REEEEEEEEEEE

HONK
HONK

... can be DEADLY.

SKREEE

RAKKK

ERREEEEEEEE

EEEEEEE

SKREEEE

REEEE

KRRRASHH

SPLOOSH

YOU'RE NOT GONNA *DIE*, YOU *HEAR* ME?

YOU'RE **NOT** GONNA DIE!

...I'M TELLING YOU -- HE JUST CAME OUT OF *NOWHERE!*

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING *LIKE IT!* IF... IF NOT FOR HIM... CINDY AND I... WE --

WE'D BOTH BE *SPLATTERED.*

SO... WHERE'S THIS MYSTERIOUS SAVIOR OF YOURS *NOW?*

HE RAN OFF.

GUESS HE'S NOT THE KIND OF MAN WHO WANTS TO HANG AROUND AND BE *THANKED.*

I'd been on the bike for nearly thirty hours. Straight on. No sleep. But that was nothing new.

After three years living the nomad's life -- travelling the world from San Francisco to Singapore to Bombay...

...I'd get a certain BUZZ from pushing myself over the edge.

Guess when a man's got no friends, no family, no IDENTITY to speak of...

...he gets his kicks where he can.

But, hey -- don't take PITY on me. Those three years had given me a strength -- and self-confidence -- I'd never had before.

The way I saw it then... having all my hopes, all my dreams of the future, stripped away -- had made BEN REILLY free. I didn't need anyone or anything. I was alone -- but COMPLETE.

Funny, isn't it?

The LIES we tell ourselves...

PART ONE:

STRANGERS

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... to stay SANE?

GORGEOUS CITY LIKE SALT LAKE...

...AND I MANAGED TO FIND THE SEEDIEST BAR IN THE SEEDIEST SIDE OF TOWN.

I'D BEEN SITTING AT THAT TABLE FOR HOURS, NURSING THE SAME BOTTLE OF VODKA, AND WONDERING WHAT THE DEVIL I WAS DOING THERE.

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE. I KNEW WHY I WAS THERE. BECAUSE OF HIM: BECAUSE OF ***REILLY***. I'D TRACKED HIM LIKE A MASTER HUNTER. DOGGED HIS TRAIL FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES WITHOUT HIM EVER KNOWING IT.

WHY?

MAYBE BECAUSE HE WASN'T BEN REILLY AT ALL...

YO -- HAND-SOME!

...BUT *PETER PARKER.*

-- YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE SOME GOOD *LOVIN'.*

AN' I GOT ***LOTS*** O' LOVE T'GIVE -- -- IF THE ***PRICE*** IS RIGHT.

PETER PARKER: *THE ORIGINAL.*

THE GENETIC TEMPLATE THAT PROFESSOR MILES WARREN, ***THE JACKAL***, USED TO CREATE COUNTERFEITS. ***CLONES.***

WHASA-MATTA? YOU DON'T LIKE MY GIRL? YOU THINK YOU'RE TOO ***GOOD*** FOR HER?

HEY... DIRTBAG --

ME.

-- I'M TALKIN' T' YOU!

THAK

KRAAK

KRAAK KRAAK KRAAK

KRRATCH!

THE JOKE OF IT WAS, REILLY DIDN'T EVEN *KNOW* HE WAS PARKER. HE THOUGHT *HE* WAS A CLONE. THOUGHT THE *REAL* PARKER WAS BACK IN NEW YORK.

IS *THAT* WHY I'D BEEN SHADOWING HIM... *MIRRORING* HIM... DURING THOSE THREE MISERABLE YEARS?

DID I WANT TO REVEAL THE TRUTH TO REILLY -- AND SET HIM *FREE?*

OR WAS I GETTING SOME KIND OF PERVERSE JOY OUT OF SEEING HIM *SUFFER?*

HERE.

DON'T SPEND IT ALL IN ONE PLACE.

OUT OF KNOWING THAT HE WAS DOOMED TO A LIFE AS LOST, AS WRETCHED...

... AS *HOLLOW* AS MY OWN?

HEYYY --

-- THANKS!

DIDN'T KNOW THEN. CAN'T SAY I KNOW *NOW.*

WE WERE... *CONNECTED,* THAT'S ALL. IT WAS AS SIMPLE -- AND AS INEXPLICABLY COMPLEX...

YOU!

...AS THAT.

YEAH, *YOU.*

WHAT'S YOUR *NAME?*

DIDN'T YOU *HEAR* ME?

I SAID -- *WHAT'S YOUR NAME?*

DON'T *HAVE* A NAME. I WAS NEVER *BORN.*

BUT YOU --

-- CAN CALL ME *KAINE.*

C'MON, BABE --

-- GET YER MIND OUTTA THE *GUTTER* AN' LET'S GET DOWN *T'BUSINESS* HERE.

TALK, JIMMY --

-- DON'T *TOUCH.*

WHUPF

HAW HA HAW HAW

NOBODY DOES THAT T'*JIMMY "THE MOUTH."*

I JUST *DID.*

THAT WAS THE NIGHT I MET *LOUISE KENNEDY.*

LOU..?

Huh?

YOU WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF A SENTENCE AND YOU JUST... *TRAILED OFF* INTO *NEVERLAND.*

SORRY, *JACOB.* I WAS JUST... THINKING.

ABOUT WHAT?

NOTHING *IMPORTANT.*

IT WAS HIM SHE WAS THINKING ABOUT, I KNOW THAT NOW: KAINE.

BUT SHE DIDN'T SAY A WORD ABOUT HIM. AND I'VE NEVER BEEN THE KIND OF MAN WHO PRIES.

MAYBE I *SHOULD* BE. MAYBE IF I'D *KNOWN*...

WHAT *IS* IMPORTANT IS THAT LITTLE MORON JIMMY "*THE MOUTH*." I KEEP PLAYING HIM --

-- AND HE'LL LEAD US RIGHT TO THE HEART OF HIS *UNCLE VINCENT'S* DRUG OPERATION.

IT MAY TAKE TIME -- BUT WE'LL BLOW WHAT'S LEFT OF *TANNEN'S* MOB TO PIECES.

BUT "MAYBES" DON'T MATTER, DO THEY? THE PAST IS DEAD.

AS DEAD AS LOUISE.

I DON'T KNOW. TANNEN'S GOT ARMS EVERY-WHERE.

EVEN THOUGH WE'VE PUT HIM BEHIND BARS --

--HIS ORGANIZATION'S JUST ROLLING ALONG LIKE A *TANK DIVISION* -- CRUSHING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.

JACOB RAVEN -- SOUNDING *PESSIMISTIC?* I DON'T *BELIEVE* IT.

NOT PESSIMISTIC. JUST... *SAD.*

LOOK AT IT OUT THERE, LOU. A GOOD CITY -- FULL OF GOOD PEOPLE. THIS ISN'T NEW YORK OR CHICAGO OR LOS ANGELES -- THIS IS *SALT LAKE.*

IT *SICKENS* ME TO THINK THAT SOMEONE LIKE TANNEN CAN JUST... *IMPLANT* HIMSELF HERE LIKE SOME KIND OF SLUG. INFECT US ALL.

YOU'RE LIVING IN ANOTHER TIME, JAKE. ANOTHER WORLD.

OPEN YOUR EYES, DETECTIVE, AND TAKE A GOOD LOOK: THE TANNENS ARE *EVERYWHERE.* AND THEY'RE *WINNING.*

I REFUSE TO BELIEVE THAT. DECENT MEN AND WOMEN CAN MAKE A *DIFFERENCE* IN THIS WORLD. THEY *DO* EVERY DAY.

THAT'S YOUR MORMON *PROGRAMMING* TALKING.

NO -- THAT'S MY *FAITH* -- -- IN GOD -- AND IN THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY.

SHE'D CHANGED SO MUCH THAT YEAR. LIFE ON THE STREETS HAD MADE HER MORE CYNICAL...

...*MORE ANGRY.*

IF ONLY SHE'D HAD SOMETHING TO BELIEVE IN. SOME SPIRITUAL FRAMEWORK FOR HER LIFE.

MAYBE THEN IT WOULDN'T HAVE ALL TURNED OUT THE WAY IT DID. MAYBE THEN --

MISTER *TANNEN* -- ?

CAN'T SEEM TO GET AWAY FROM THOSE "MAYBES," CAN I?

CAN'T STOP TRYING TO RE-WRITE THE PAST. CHANGE WHAT HAPPENED.

TO LOUISE. TO TANNEN.

HEY, STEVIE -- WHADDYA KNOW, WHADDYA SAY?

S'ALL SET.

I WANT HIM TO SUFFER.

GOOD. TELL 'EM THERE'D BETTER NOT BE ANY SCREW-UPS. I WANT THAT MAN TO FEEL PAIN.

TO... ALL OF US.

I sat there, across the desk from the head of the SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, spinning beautifully designed lies with alarming ease.

THIS LETTER FROM DOCTOR TRAINER IS MOST IMPRESSIVE, MISTER REILLY.

A part of me had begun to enjoy it. Not so much the LYING -- as the fabrication of a LIFE.

Weaving a past that never happened. Jobs that never existed.

After all, the only life I'd ever known had been taken AWAY from me by the Jackal -- on the day I discovered I wasn't Peter Parker...

...but his CLONE.

WITH A RECOMMENDATION LIKE THIS FROM ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED SCIENTIFIC MINDS IN THE COUNTRY...

...NOT TO MENTION YOUR OWN FAIRLY IMPRESSIVE CREDENTIALS --

-- I'D BE HARD PRESSED TO TURN YOU DOWN FOR THE JOB.

DR NORA EPSTEIN

When everything you've ever BELIEVED about yourself turns out to be a lie -- how can the truth POSSIBLY matter?

The joke of it all was that it DID matter. A part of me felt terrible every time I went through this dance.

WELCOME ABOARD, MISTER REILLY. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.

THE PAY'S NOT MUCH... THE HOURS ARE TOO LONG... BUT I THINK YOU'LL FIND THE WORK REWARDING.

I'M SURE I WILL, PROFESSOR EPSTEIN. AND THANK YOU.

But of course he wasn't MY uncle Ben, WAS he? He was PARKER'S. So, with no small effort...

I kept hearing Uncle Ben lecturing me on how important HONESTY was. How the one thing in the world he couldn't ABIDE was a LIAR.

...I pushed the voice away.

Oh, AND ONE MORE THING, MISTER REILLY --

Mmmm?

CLEAN YOURSELF UP A LITTLE. IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A TEACHING ASSISTANT, YOU'VE GOT TO LOOK LIKE ONE.

ABSOLUTELY, PROFESSOR.

I wouldn't find out the truth -- that I WAS Parker, the REAL Parker... and that the Jackal had IMPLANTED the belief that I was my own clone -- for another two years. (And don't ask me to tell you THAT story -- it's much too long.)

So I strolled off across the campus, satisfied that my faked resume... my faked LIFE... would at least bring in enough money to finance my next round of wanderings.

A month, maybe more, and they'd find me out.

My friend Seward Trainer would muster up that horrified voice he'd perfected...

...and tell Professor Epstein how SHOCKED he was that he'd been taken in by "that young fraud."

But by then I'd be long gone.

I'M READY TO ORDER, MISS. I'LL HAVE THREE EGGS, SCRAMBLED, WITH SOME SAUSAGE. CUP O'COFFEE. AND A TOASTED BAGEL.

WAIT, WAIT. FORGET THE BAGEL. YOU LEAVE NEW YORK AND THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A DECENT BAGEL. MAKE IT RYE TOAST. TONS OF BUTTER.

MISS..?

Back on the road, living the life I...

...loved.

GOT YA.

If I was a cartoon, my jaw would have hit the floor...

...my eyes would have spun in circles, and my tongue would have rolled fifty feet across the room.

THREE EGGS, SCRAMBLED, WITH SAUSAGE. AND RYE TOAST WITH TONS OF BUTTER.

ANY-THING *ELSE* YOU'D LIKE -- OR... Ah... IS THAT ENOUGH *CHOLESTEROL* FOR ONE DAY?

Instead I just *STARED* at her -- like the fumble-mouthed nerd Parker... I... used to be in high school.

But somehow, ordering breakfast turned into a conversation. And the conversation went on for an *HOUR*.

Looking back, it's amazing either one of us said *ANYTHING*.

I mean, JANINE was probably more shy and awkward, more guarded, than I was.

SORRY TO INTERRUPT, JANINE --

-- BUT COULD I GET MY *USUAL*? BAGGED? I'M RUNNING A LITTLE *LATE* TODAY.

S-SURE, DETECTIVE RAVEN... *SURE!*

IT'LL JUST TAKE ME A *SECOND* TO --

KLOK

She was *SCARED* of him.

Well, maybe not *SCARED*... but something about this Detective Raven made her awfully tense.

So, immediately, my back went up. He made small talk, I muttered and grumbled. Tried to brush him off.

Only problem was, I couldn't. I *LIKED* the guy.

-- or *UNCLE* BEN.

I'm a pretty fair judge of character. My intuition -- not to mention my *SPIDER-SENSE* -- goes off like an alarm clock if I'm dealing with sleazoids. But Raven -- ? The man *RADIATED* decency. I felt like I was talking to *JIMMY STEWART*, or --

I was actually a little sorry to see him go. Janine clearly wasn't.

WHAT IS IT?

WHAT?

SOMETHING ABOUT THAT GUY GIVES YOU THE *CREEPS.*

DETECTIVE RAVEN?

NO, NO -- I HAVEN'T GOT ANY PROBLEM WITH *HIM.*

HE'S A GOOD MAN. LOCAL HERO.

PRACTICALLY PUT THAT MOB GUY... VINCENT TANNEN... AWAY SINGLE-HANDED.

SORRY. GUESS I READ IT WRONG.

YEAH. GUESS YOU DID.

LOOK... Ah... I KNOW THIS IS GOING TO SOUND LIKE A LINE --

-- BUT, WELL, I'M *NEW* IN TOWN. I *KNOW* THAT'S LAME, BUT I *SWEAR* IT'S TRUE.

SO... I'M *NEW* IN TOWN AND... WELL I WAS WONDERING IF MAYBE WE COULD HAVE... I DUNNO... *DINNER* TONIGHT AND --

...I...

I DON'T *THINK* SO, NO.

EXT.

OKAY. SURE. NO BIG DEAL.

YES.

YES?

YES.

YES!

WHAT WAS IT THAT DREW ME TO HER?

WHERE'S JIMMY "THE MOUTH" TONIGHT?

LITTLE FAT MAN ATE SOMETHING ***BAD***, HE SAID. GOT HIMSELF A CASE OF FOOD POISONING.

AT FIRST I COULDN'T SAY. SOMETHING IN HER VOICE? IN HER EYES?

BUT DON'T YOU WORRY, SWEETHEART -- ***DUKE'LL*** TAKE REAL GOOD CARE OF YOU.

YOU WANNA CHECK THE ***STUFF*** OUT?

Uh-uh. JIMMY KNOWS I'D BREAK HIS ***NECK*** IF HE TRIED TO SCAM ME.

TELL HIM HE'LL GET THE REST OF THE MONEY WITH THE NEXT SHIPMENT.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY, MONEY.

IN HER ***SOUL?***

YOU KNOW THAT OLD SONG? *"MONEY CAN'T BUY ME LOVE"*?

GUY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT. MONEY -- IT CAN BUY ANYTHING. WOMEN, POWER --

KLIK

A JAIL TERM?

Oh... #%$@!

THAT'S ***ONE*** WAY OF PUTTING IT.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT. ANYTHING YOU SAY CAN AND WILL BE --

KLIK KLIK

-- HELD AGAINST YOU?

I THINK THIS IS WHERE *YOU* GET TO SAY "Oh...#%$@!"

...AND INSTANTLY KNOW EACH OTHER...IN THE DEEPEST, MOST INTIMATE WAYS.

JIMMY'S THE MORON, LADY, NOT *ME*. I NEVER GO *ANYWHERE* ALONE.

WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE MEETING *ALONE*, DUKE.

THEY SAY THERE'S SUCH A THING AS KARMA. THAT TWO SOULS CAN BE LINKED, FROM TIME'S BEGINNING -- TO TIME'S END. THAT TWO PEOPLE CAN MEET...

I MEAN, LET'S FACE IT -- IT'S A *DANGEROUS* WORLD OUT THERE. YOU NEVER KNOW *WHAT* KIND OF WHACKOS YOU'RE GONNA RUN INTO.

KRASH

I DON'T KNOW IF I BELIEVE IN KARMA. AND, EVEN IF I DID, I DON'T KNOW IF IT CAN *APPLY* TO A MAN WHO DOESN'T *HAVE* A SOUL.

I JUST KNOW, THAT FROM THE MOMENT I LAID EYES ON HER, I BECAME *OBSESSED* WITH LOUISE KENNEDY.

WHO THE #?!* ARE YOU?!

DON'T ASK QUESTIONS.

CHAKK

DON'T EXPECT *ANSWERS.*

SPAKK

LIFE DOESN'T *WORK* LIKE THAT. IT ISN'T NEAT.

I WAS DRIVEN BY AN OVERWHELMING COMPULSION TO *KNOW* HER...BE *NEAR* HER. AS IF I SENSED THAT SHE HELD THE KEY TO SOMETHING HUGELY *IMPORTANT* -- THAT I COULDN'T LIVE *WITHOUT.*

IT'S ALL CONFUSION. AND CHAOS.

AND THAT "*SOMETHING*" WAS SO *DEEP* IN MY SOUL (OR WHAT PASSED FOR ONE)...

AND DEATH.

...THAT I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW ITS *NAME.*

THAT'S HOW I FOUND MYSELF *FOLLOWING* HER THAT NIGHT...TRACKING HER WITH THE KIND OF INTENSITY I USUALLY RESERVED FOR *REILLY.*

NO! WE NEED HIM IN ONE PIECE -- FOR QUESTIONING!

WHATEVER YOU SAY, OFFICER.

GO TO *SLEEP,* DUKE.

KRK

SHE WASN'T AFRAID OF ME. LATER, SHE TOLD ME THAT SHE WASN'T EVEN SURPRISED I WAS *THERE.*

SAID SHE'D FELT THE SAME COMPULSION, THE SAME OBSESSION, BURNING INSIDE *HER.* BURNING...

SO -- -- *NOW* WHAT?

I CAN THINK OF A FEW THINGS.

...FOR ME.

WAIT!

MISSED THE BUS AGAIN. EVERY NIGHT, IT SEEMED, I'D MAKE IT TO THE STOP JUST TEN SECONDS TOO LATE.

I THINK IT WAS GOD'S WAY OF FORCING ME TO WALK HOME. GET **SOME** EXERCISE.

ON TV, COPS ARE ALWAYS RUNNING AROUND, HOPPING FENCES, LEAPING FROM OVERPASSES, CHASING FELONS DOWN ALLEYS.

TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS, WE SPEND **MOST** OF OUR TIME IN CARS AND BEHIND DESKS. EATING TOO MANY DONUTS.

FORTY-FOUR YEARS OLD AND I WAS GETTING LAZIER AND CHUNKIER BY THE DAY.

SO I'D WALK THE FOUR MILES TO THE HOUSE, STRUT IN THE DOOR...

...AND TELL **MATTHEW** HOW HIS DAD'S GONNA BE LOOKING LIKE ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER ANY DAY NOW.

AND THEN **HELENE** WOULD PUT DINNER ON THE TABLE -- I DON'T THINK THERE WAS A FINER COOK ON THE PLANET -- AND I'D EAT ENOUGH FOR AN ENTIRE SQUAD ROOM.

AND WHAT DID IT MATTER? HELENE AND MATTHEW LOVED ME...

...FAT OR LEAN.

SKREEE

I WISH I'D **BEEN** SCHWARZENEGGER THAT NIGHT...MAYBE THEN I WOULD'VE REALIZED THEY'D BEEN **TAILING** ME.

MAYBE THEN I WOULD'VE MOVED FASTER, HAD MY GUN OUT BEFORE TANNEN'S GOONS WERE ALL **OVER** ME.

THERE I GO AGAIN: MAYBE, MAYBE, MAYBE.

I ACCEPT NOW THAT WHAT HAPPENED -- **HAD** TO HAPPEN.

THAT THE EVENTS OF THAT HORRIBLE NIGHT WERE PART OF GOD'S **PLAN** FOR ME. A WAY TO BRING ME **CLOSER** TO HIM.

BUT I STILL WONDER, IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, WHEN I LIE AWAKE **MISSING** HER...

...IF HE COULDN'T HAVE FOUND A BETTER WAY TO **DO** IT.

I was on my way to Janine's. Feeling like a nervous high-school kid... and not sure why.

Something about her really got to me...

...and for a guy who'd become expert at hiding himself behind emotional walls, that was a scary thing.

I'd moved into my new apartment that afternoon. The university had found it for me -- just one room, but it was all I needed. All I wanted.

I didn't LIKE the idea of being settled. Of having a place to call my own. That was PARKER'S life -- not MINE.

I was Ben Reilly, the LONER. The ROAD WARRIOR. The Jack Kerouac of the clone set.

I guess the truth was, if I slowed down too long, I'd start remembering what I'd once had... or THOUGHT I'd had...

...and I'd start getting CRAZY again.

I'd lost it one time too many during those first three years. And, as much as I enjoyed living on the edge, THAT was one edge...

I intended to stay CLEAR of.

It isn't often that my Spider-Sense kicks in so strong it nearly knocks me flat on my butt.

SKRAKT

Couldn't ignore that...

...no matter HOW much I hated playing the hero.

Or TOLD myself I did.

So I hit the ground running, following the buzz... letting it LEAD me to the source of the danger.

But I FOUND it...

BA DOOM

...a little too late.

I hated playing the hero.

All I wanted was to be left alone. I didn't ask for the power. I didn't ask for the RESPONSIBILITY.

Yeah -- I HATED playing the hero.

That's why my adrenaline was pumping like MAD as I raced through that burning house, leaping over the flames, dodging the wreckage.

That's why I felt such a rush of EXHILARATION -- of freedom and power -- as I pulled that woman and her son OUT.

I may not have been wearing the costume, I may have vowed never even to speak the NAME again...

...but at times like those... I was HIM:

I was SPIDER-MAN.

And grateful FOR it.

RRING

KENNEDY.

WHAT?!

Oh, MY GOD... NO.

WHAT IS IT?

THERE... THERE WAS SOME KIND OF *EXPLOSION* -- AT MY *PARTNER'S* HOUSE.

IS HE DEAD?

HE... HE'S *MISSING*. NO ONE CAN FIND HIM. BUT -- HIS WIFE. HIS LITTLE *BOY*.

THEY DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE GOING TO *MAKE* IT.

HOLD ME, KAINE.

HOLD ME --

-- AND DON'T EVER LET GO.

NEVER.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, LOUISE -- I'M *STILL* HOLDING YOU. EVEN TODAY. EVEN AFTER WHAT I DID.

HOLDING TIGHT.

YEAH, IT WAS A **BOMB**, ALL RIGHT.

LOOKS LIKE TANNEN MANAGED TO GET T'RAVEN FROM BEHIND BARS.

YEAH, AND GOOD LUCK TO ANYBODY TRYING TO **PROVE** IT.

THE ONE WHO ***REALLY*** NEEDS THE LUCK --

"-- IS THAT **WOMAN** IN THERE."

The boy, at least, was going to make it. But Raven's wife was hovering on the edge. They didn't think she'd last the night.

And Raven: was HE dead, too? Or being HELD somewhere by Tannen's men?

I had to find out.

After all, I was the one with the power, the responsibility. Who ELSE could do it?

WHO ELSE?

How about the Salt Lake Police Department? How about the FBI, the CIA, the Navy and the Marines?

How about ANYONE but me?

Just an hour before I'd felt such a RUSH from playing super-powered savior... but, at that moment, I'd had ENOUGH.

Jumping out of the shadows, doing a quick save, and then vanishing into the mists was ONE thing.

But THIS --!

I knew if I took one more step into it, I wouldn't stop until I took Tannen and his mob APART.

But I'd BEEN there. DONE that. All I wanted now was some quiet. Some peace. Was that too much to ask?

NO, I decided. I don't have to do this. I don't wear the webs anymore. Truth is -- I never DID. Let the cops take care of Tannen. And let Jacob Raven...

...take care of himself.

NEXT: REILLY VS. KAINE!

Fake!
The word echoes through Ben Reilly's consciousness.
Fake! Imposter!
Clone.
For years that's what Reilly believed about himself — that he was a clone of Peter Parker, a.k.a. the amazing Spider-Man. . .and that he was doomed to live out the rest of his unnatural existence wandering the back-roads of America, trying to find a place for himself in a cold, hard world.
Recently, however, Reilly found out the truth about himself — that *he* was the original and *Parker* was the clone. But this is a tale of Reilly's past, about a time well before he made that discovery. . .about a time that would change Reilly's life forever.
Spider-Man: The Lost Years tells the story of how Ben Reilly, in his quest to find peace and happiness, crosses paths with the mysterious, murderous Kaine, a man dedicated to Reilly's destruction, and the tragic consequences that have haunted Reilly ever since.